

Burwell Scrapbook 1897 to 1990

Facts, Features and (occasional) Fallacies
reported in Cambridge Newspapers

summarised by

Mike Petty

Most of these stories originally appeared in the Cambridge Daily/Evening/News or the
Cambridgeshire Weekly News, its sister title.

They are supplemented by some articles published in the
Cambridge Independent Press or Cambridge Chronicle

Most were featured in my 'Looking Back' column in the Cambridge News from 1996-2014

The complete 'Cambridgeshire Scrapbook' of which this is a small section is published online at
bit.ly/CambsCollection

I have digital and other copies of most of the stories summarised.
I hope to publish these online one day. If you would like them in the meantime then please get in
touch.

The original volumes are housed in the Cambridgeshire Collection at Cambridge Central Library
where there are many other indexes dating back to 1770.

They also have detailed newspaper cuttings files on over 750 topics that have been compiled since the
1960s.

Newspapers sometimes get things wrong. I copy things out incorrectly. Do check

There are a multitude of spelling and layout errors. Please forgive or correct them

News never stops but this file was finished on 31 August 2016.

I will maintain supplements and corrections – contact me for anything you need

Please make what use of these notes that you may. Kindly remember where they came from

See my website – www.mikepetty.org.uk for further notes.

Mike Petty, Stretham

2017

1897 11 20

At the meeting of Cambridgeshire County Council a letter from Longstanton Parish Council asking for permission to erect a fire-engine house on waste ground aside of the highway, near the Black Bull Inn, was considered. An application from Burwell Parish Council for permission to borrow money for a recreation ground was read. The Council had now received five requests to lend money to Parish Councils for providing burial grounds.

1898 05 06

Burwell Congregational church presentation, p8

1898 09 22

Newmarket draining into Burwell Fen commission, p3

1898 11 17

Death Colchester of Burwell, p3 *

1899 02 23

Inspectors of the Local Government Board held an inquiry at Newmarket respecting the proposed new main drainage schemes for the district. The sewers had been a source of difficulty and trouble in consequence of its faulty construction. The present sewage farm had caused constant complaints. The method of exposing sewage in trenches or ditches to stagnate was so very unsatisfactory that it was likely to cause a serious nuisance. Last year a scheme had to be abandoned in consequence of the Burwell Fen Commissioners objecting to the discharge of effluent on their fen

1899 03 13

The grass which grows in luxuriance on the banks of the Devils ditch at Burwell caught fire about 1½ miles from the main road from Cambridge to Newmarket. Very quickly the undergrowth on the side farthest from Newmarket in both the ditch and on the bank was ablaze. Portions of the Heath became ignited. Assistance was quickly forthcoming from the farm and houses in the vicinity, but the fire had extended about a mile before it could be got under control. It is believed that a lighted match was dropped by someone passing

1899 06 23

Burwell builder bankrupt, p4

1899 08 02

Sir – I was cycling from Cambridge to Soham and between Burwell and Fordham I came suddenly upon a closed and barred gate, which I was kindly permitted to pass through on paying a toll of twopence. I learned that the gate is called the Ness Gate, that the roadway at this point is Crown property. In its present position this gate is a danger to cyclists but its very existence is a ridiculous and monstrous anomaly with its toll of 1d for every vehicle hailing from Burwell and 4d for every vehicle coming from less favoured districts. It is a very unfortunate circumstance that this piece of road is rented by the vice-chairman of the County Council – A.J. Wyatt

1899 08 21

Sir - For the past two years I have been cultivating a piece of land at Burwell and selling the produce, which consists chiefly of vegetables, at Cambridge. One piece of this land is in the fen, and one piece is high land. The solicitor for the University claimed tithe rent for the land in the fen. I have proved the piece of land which was under water for years previous to the time of my father and others who drained it, was not titheable. I was tried at the County Court by the Registrar, who refused to hear my witness, the oldest man in Burwell, who could give evidence as to the history of this matter. Now the bailiff has taken about £20 worth of oats and potatoes for a claim of £2 0s 10d from the piece of land I

offered to pay tithe on. Where is justice in this case, after the paying of parson's heavy tithe rent? -
Joseph Manning

1899 09 14c

The firemen on duty at Newmarket Jockey Club Owners' and Trainers' Fire Brigade noticed a big glare in the vicinity of Burwell, and at once the telephone was requisitioned to inquire at the brigade office whether a call had been received. The engines having been got ready the men donned their uniform and fastened on accoutrements, and then lit the lamps of the engine. But no call came. The Burwell Fire Brigade had their first experience of a fire, for although an engine has for some time been in the village, it is only within the past few weeks that a brigade has been formed.

1899 10 13

A considerable amount of dissatisfaction has arisen in regard to the tithe charge imposed on certain lands in Burwell fen by Cambridge University. The land in question is some 3,000 acres in extent and was formerly under water. Nearly 60 years ago the fen was drained. The greater part is utilised for agriculture, but a portion is cultivated as market gardens. The imposition of a tithe has weighed heavily on the owners and there has been speculation as to the legality of the charge. No tithe was exacted until after the drainage about 1840 and while some owners have paid others have been allowed to go scot free. Now the parish council has purchased ten acres for a public recreation ground and decline to pay the tithe

1899 10 25

A murder of a most ghastly and revolting nature was committed at Burwell Lode. It is rare that a murder so determined in its criminal intent as that perpetrated in the thick fog of the early morning on the banks of the river Lode is heard of. An old woman was brutally murdered by her husband in the sight of their piteously-screaming thirteen-year-old daughter, & almost within a stone's throw of where two grown-up sons were working. & 26th p2

1899 10 28

Burwell inquest, p3

1900 01 15

Burwell murder, p3 *

1900 01 16

Burwell murder verdict, p3

1900 04 04

The following appointments of parish constables were made: Burwell, H. Martin; Brinkley, F. Geo. Howard; Cheveley, J. Nicholls; Chippenham, A. Duffield; Dullingham, J. Smith; Fordham G.R. Godfrey; Isleham, J. Dilley; Soham H. Rouse; Wicken, W. Barton; Wood Ditton J.J. Howe & C. Cates.

1900 05 22

Burwell publican, p2 *

1900 07 11

Skeleton at Burwell, p3

1901 01 16

The wedding of George Colchester will long be remembered by the employees of Messrs Colchester and Ball, chemical manufacturers, of Burwell, who all had a half-day's holiday to celebrate the occasion. All the men, numbering about 85, employed at the Chemical Manure Works, Brickworks and Farm were entertained to dinner at the Anchor Inn. A generous repast, consisting of good English fare was served. James Fabin, the oldest employee, having seen 45 years' service gave an account of the great progress since he worked for Mr Thomas T. Ball who started the Manure Works.

1901 08 22

John Durrant, a yeoman farmer living at Burwell told the court that his orchard adjoined that of his neighbour. A plum tree grew on his ground but some of the branches overhung the fence. He asked to gather the fruit by placing a ladder on his neighbour's side, but this was refused. When he had mounted the ladder on his side the neighbour rushed at the separating hedge and threatened to knock his brains out with a screwdriver. The magistrate said it was a pity neighbours could not live in concord and sanity. As to who had the right to the plums it was not for that court to decide.

1902 08 13

Burwell murder, p3

1902 10 27

Burwell murder trial, p2

1902 11 05

Burwell toll gate, p4

1902 11 14

Burwell tragedy, p3

1902 11 28

Newmarket RDC are to ask the County Council to use their influence with the Commissioners of Woods and Forests, the owners of the Burwell Ness Toll Bar, to ascertain on what terms they would allow it to be removed and the road made over to the public. There were a great many people in the neighbourhood who would be pleased to see the road open, including cyclists from all parts of the county.

1902 12 03

Burwell turnpike road, p3 *

1903 09 19

Burwell fire, p3

1904 01 14

Burwell barber, p3

1904 05 04

The County Coroner has pointed out the stupidity of the superstition which induces people to refrain from rendering assistance to the apparently hanged or drowned person, until the arrival of the police. A labourer at Burwell found his brother hanging in his cellar and instead of cutting him down he sent for the police. In this case the unfortunate man had been dead for many hours but it is essential to render immediate aid on the supposition that life is not extinct. Many a person now dead would be alive today had this simple rule been acted upon

1905 02 14

Magistrates heard that there were four public rooms in the fully-licensed 'Wait For the Bus' at Bottisham. There were four alehouses, four beerhouses and one grocer's licence for a population of 624. It used to be a very good pub when the old omnibuses used to run to Cambridge but since the railways had been opened there was little or no traffic on the road to Burwell. The landlord, Samuel Marshman said the trade amounted to about three barrels a month but it also provided teas and luncheons. He did not want the licence to be extinguished. 05 02 14b

1905 05 16

Newmarket Rural District Council discussed the tolls payable at the toll-gate on the Ness Road between Burwell and Fordham. They were a great inconvenience to travellers & the Crown Receivers would accept £600 for the purchase of the tolls, making the road free. Mr Ambrose has promised £100 and if the County Council would contribute £250 they should find the remainder. 05 05 16d

1905 12 01

The toll gate between Burwell and Fordham was removed and declared open and free from tolls for ever. Its removal will be a great blessing to everybody who has occasion to use the road. The price for which the gate has for ever been freed from tolls is £600; the county and rural councils have contributed £250 each and the balance raised by Mr Ambrose who declared the gate open 05 12 01a

1905 12 02

Burwell toll gate – history – 05 12 02c, d & e

1906 03 14

Burwell passive resisters, p4

1906 03 20

Burwell road, p4

1906 06 19

Burwell Poor's Fen charity details of history – 06 06 19c

1906 07 06

A labourer at Burwell cement factory was feeding clunch into the crusher; this consists of two large iron rollers studded with teeth and covered with a steel plate with a hole into which the lumps of clunch are shovelled. His foot went into the hole and was caught by the cogs which drew his leg between the rollers and reduced it to pulp up to the knee. It could not be extricated until the plate had been smashed. He never lost consciousness all the while. 06 07 06

1906 07 09

Burwell inquest, p3

1906 08 03

Burwell is included in a Government scheme for colonising England by offering vacant Crown land to smallholders. A start has been made with a farm of 916 acres which is being cut up into parcels of between two and twenty acres and let to the Cambs Small Holders Association. There are some excellent cottages, two farmhouses and farm buildings and these are being allotted to the new tenants who will enter upon their holdings at Michaelmas. 06 08 03

1906 08 10

Burwell land, p3 *

1906 08 15

Burwell lode, p3 *

1906 08 25

Burwell letter, p4 *

1906 009 20

Dr Lucas death, Burwell, p3

1906 10 11

The laying of the foundation stone of a new Sunday School in connection with Burwell Congregational Church attracted a large gathering. It will consist of an assembly hall seating 180

children, with class rooms and kitchen, built of Burwell bricks and heated with hot water throughout. T.L. Grimson acted as honorary architect and W.P. Fuller will carry out the work at a cost of £650.

1907 05 15

A meeting called to consider the disastrous consequences to agricultural labourers when farms were made into small holdings heard from men formerly employed on the Crown Lands farms, Burwell who had been turned out of house and home. But another meeting at West Row heard of the serious depopulation of rural districts and supported the Government's plans to bring the land within the reach of the people. 07 05 25a & b

1907 05 22

Claims have been made about the impact of smallholdings on Burwell. But our reporter found no outward sign of unemployment, no discontented farm labourers on village corners, no despondent tradesmen lounging outside empty shops. Quite the contrary: Burwell wore its customary air of quiet prosperity. It is said the 'discontented' men received 'a good feed, all the beer they could drink and half-a-dollar' from the MP for East Cambridgeshire for attending a meeting. 07 05 22 & a

1907 06 20

Burwell labourers claim they were thrown out of work when the Government converted farms into smallholdings. But they were all paid compensation and most quickly found work at practically the same wages as before. Each received fifty shillings for 'costs of removal' but the farmers removed their belongings for them free. Demand for labour has been greater than before and the Highway Surveyors had difficulty getting granite carted as the men were so busy on the smallholdings. 07 06 20a & b

1907 06 21

The discussions over the Poor's Fen Charity, which has excited the inhabitants of Burwell for many months and given rise to animated meetings, entered a new stage when the Charity Commissioners opened an inquiry. A large proportion of the male population, and several ladies followed the details closely for four hours as its history was traced 07 06 21 Burwell charities inquiry concluded – 07 06 22a

1907 07 04

Burwell small holdings – critics – 07 07 04

1907 07 27

Burwell small holdings report – 07 07 27

1907 08 01

The sunny side of the Burwell Small Holdings experiment is very attractive. Viewing a snug cottage pleasantly set among several acres of pasture land, shaded by a collection of ancient trees, with a spacious kitchen and flower garden near at hand, a town dweller is envious of the men who have set up on the Crown Lands. The scheme has met exceptionally fierce criticism but after one season's results it can be pronounced a success. 07 08 01 & a

1907 11 28

Burwell Cement Works gutted by fire – 07 11 28

1908 01 03

On Saturday morning a badger was noticed sitting in a hole near a haystack at High Town Drove, Burwell. The animal appeared to be very fierce and attacked a dog whose owner promptly killed it. It was shown to the Vicar who pronounced it a very fine specimen of the English badger. The owner took it to Newmarket for sale, where he was offered five shillings for it. He refused and took it back to Burwell where he eventually accepted one-and-six. It is many years since a badger has been seen here. 08 01 03b

1908 01 10

Miss Sarah Hurst says she cashed a £10 cheque at Dalzell's grocers shop, Exning but as she approached Burwell station she was stopped by two men who threatened her with a knife and stole the change from her purse. She went home but did not tell her father until after supper as she did not want to disturb him. Police can find nothing to corroborate her story and a man who was shooting sparrows nearby says he heard nothing. But Sarah says she dared not call out and just wanted to get home with her gloves – she had a five pound note and three sovereigns tucked inside them. 08 01 10e

1908 05 15

Burwell Rifle Range was opened in disused maltings and is one of the best miniature ranges in the country. The approaches were decked with flags while a carpeted space inside was lighted by colour-screened lamps to serve when the windows were shuttered for firing practice. The club was formed in March and already has 87 members. They were all very patriotic and knew it was necessary they should all be able to shoot in case they were called upon. 08 05 15 & a

1908 08 14

Burwell mineral water manufacturer, Fred Lapia, was bottling at the premises known as Droford's when one of the bottles broke and a fragment of glass severed two of the arteries in his arm. Doctors Ennion and Lucas applied a tourniquet. On Sunday the band accompanying the Hospital Parade ceased playing while passing his house in consideration of the patient. CWN 08 08 14 p5

1909 02 19

Airships were the real menace, Burwell Rifle Club was told. Foreign nations had an immense number of them capable of living up in the air for 48 hours away from their base. They could carry half a ton of dynamite. They could not dodge over floating ironclads and attack them but they could drop dynamite into our naval dockyards and a navy without a base was not a navy at all. The authorities in the United States were very worried about them. 09 02 19

1909 07 04

Reach church was built on the site of the old one in 1860 and for 40 years schooling has been held there. But the Board of Education had signified its intention of withdrawing recognition so a new school is being built on the site of the old Ship Inn to accommodate 80 children. The architect is Hubert Hunt of Burwell and the builder J.G. Cowell of Soham. CWN 09 07 04

1909 08 27

A small-holder, horny-handed, weather beaten and obviously a hard worker, led the way to his oat field where the shocks of golden grain were awaiting carting. He was one of the pioneering Burwell Small Holdings scheme, a sturdy, independent and cheerful race springing up from the labouring and small tradesmen class thankful for the reform which has given them a share in the soil. Hall Farm, a white-washed homestead ringed by a fruitful orchard typifies country life at its best while eight cottages are now being built each with an acre of ground attached. CWN 09 08 27

1910 01 28

General election – Barrington, Shelford – 10 01 07a, Over, Fen Drayton – 10 01 14m & n, Soham, Fordham – 10 01 28d, Newmarket, Burwell, Ely – 10 01 28e

1910 04 08

Bargemen objected to proposed bylaws regarding lighting on barges saying they can travel more safely without them. Mr Charles Dyson of North Street Burwell said "My barges are required to carry oil, sedge, turf etc and the use of lights might prove dangerous. I have travelled on the river for 40 years and never seen any accident caused by not using lights". E.H. Godby of Littleport says he does a lot of hay and chaff work and cannot afford to have his cargo burnt while Colchester and Ball of Burwell says their boats do not travel at night and see no reason why they should show a light when

stationery. Ferry boat owners also say it would be a serious expense to have to keep lights burning all night. 10 04 08 b & c

1910 04 08

J. Carter applied to renew a hackney carriage licence for his brake to allow it to ply for hire in Newmarket as he had for 36 years. He was the father of 13 children, 11 of whom lived with him in Burwell, but they are fed and clothed with goods purchased in Newmarket. He purchased all his provisions, clothes and boots in the town and spent considerably more there than he earned from his trade. He'd had the brake made especially for the races and it was as good as any other. Police said brakes were useful but they were used by a certain class (pickpockets etc) who could not operate so well in landaus. The application was granted. 10 04 08e

1910 05 06

Under the new Midwives Act no woman can habitually attend women in childbirth unless she is certified. There were 54 midwives on the register of whom 30 were trained. Ten of the untrained women were between the ages of 65-75 and might need replacing before long by reason of death or infirmity. There was only one trained midwife at Willingham and an untrained woman at Landbeach. There were none at Isleham, Burwell, Wicken, Upware, Milton, Cottenham, Swavesey or Histon. Some mothers can afford the fee of a medical practitioner but are unable also to pay the full fee of a skilled nurse and so may turn to unregistered women 10 05 06b & c

1910 08 12

The landlord of the Horse and Groom beer house Soham was summonsed for serving beer to six men on the afternoon of Hospital Sunday. Alfred Jefferies said they knocked at the gate at about 3.17 o'clock. He opened it and asked where they came from. One said 'Burwell', which was over the three mile limit, and others said 'the same'. But in fact they came from Fordham. The court dropped the charge against the landlord but police prosecuted the drinkers who had wrongly represented themselves to be travellers. 10 08 12f

1910 09 09

Henry Palmer reminiscences of Cambridge in the 1850s, Burwell riots and public right-of-way from Petersfield into South Street - 10 09 09aaa

1911 05 26

Mr Turner, hairdresser of Burwell found in a new litter of seven pigs that one of them had six legs – two hind legs quiet perfect and two others jutting out behind. The extra legs were correctly formed and as long as usual. The suckling was healthy and vigorous; it took its part in the litter and was eager for the sow's milk. But it came to an untimely end by the sow accidentally stamping on its head. Mr Gillson has photographed this freak of nature – 11 05 26

1911 06 30

Chesterton Horticultural and Sports Society held their first annual show in the pretty grounds of Meadow Croft. The extreme dryness of the weather accounted for the emptiness of some of the classes but still 500 entries were received. At Burwell the long, cold spring and droughty summer almost prevented the showing of some vegetables but at Stapleford flower show the cottagers' section was especially good in regard to potatoes and beans 11 06 30f

1912 02 02

Burwell small holdings – history and details – 12 02 02c & d

1912 02 23

The funeral of Canon John William Cockshott was held at Burwell. After leaving Cambridge University he'd hoped never to return to the fens but was called to the curacy of Soham. From there he went to Burwell where he established the Mission Church. He built a school at Reach, which has since been consecrated, and also restored the church at Landwade. In 1885 he was appointed vicar of

Stretham where he remained until 1906 when he felt unable to fulfil his duties to his satisfaction. On his retirement he went to live at Shelford where he did active pastoral work. 12 02 23a

1912 06 07

Spring Close, Burwell, which includes the site of Burwell Castle which was held for King Stephen against the rebellious Mandeville, will be offered for sale by auction. It should be purchased by the Parish Council and preserved as an open space to remind future generations of the part played by the village in the history of England in the days when High Town was a Norman residence and Newnham a Saxon village, when the church stood where the boys' school now stands and the dead were buried where schoolboys now cultivate their beds of garden. Should the cost – about £500 – be too great the council should ensure the site is preserved from any interference 12 06 07o

1913 01 10 CIP

Burwell – Herbert Hunt departs for Canada

Burwell smallholder drunk in charge of horse and cart

1913 01 31

The Pumping Station of the Burwell Lode at Upware was completely gutted by fire, the building and machinery, with the exception of the pump being destroyed and the whole station rendered useless. The building was about 72 years old and consisted of three rooms with the engine in the centre. The work had been done by a steam engine up till 17 years ago when the present 32 h.p. oil engine was installed. It is believed the fire was due to the floor becoming overheated through the working of the engine and there might have been a slight leak of paraffin, which suddenly caught fire. Charles Bell, the engineer, was severely singed about the head and face, his hair, beard, moustache and eyebrows being burned. 13 01 31 p8 CIP

1913 03 07

Burwell obit George Failes Le Pla

1913 03 24

Parish council elections, Burwell, Fen Ditton, Grantchester charities

1913 04 04

Congregational union – villages, Burwell, Castle Camps, Chatteris, Eversden, Fordham, Whittlesey, Balsham, West Wrating. Cheveley, Shelford, Six Mile Bottom *

1913 04 18

The enterprising Newmarket and District 'Bus Company plans a motor bus service for Soham on market days departing from the Crown Hotel at 12.30 on Tuesdays and arriving at Newmarket an hour later. On Thursdays they leave from the Market Square for Ely. The vehicles, supplied by the London General 'Bus Companies, present an exceedingly smart appearance, being painted yellow picked out with dark blue. They have electric light and are exceptionally quiet running. The company has already started a service of buses between Burwell and Newmarket, doing three journeys a day 13 04 18 p11
Burwell parish meeting

1913 05 02

East Cambs bye-election, meetings Burwell, Whittlesford, Ely, Wicken, Soham. Ely, Sawston, Cherry Hinton

13 05 16 p11 CIP

Suffragettes, Burwell

1913 05 30

Two undergraduates told the court they were coming up the Cam in light sculling boats when they met a tug towing a string of six barges belonging to Colchester and Ball of Burwell. The barges

smashed their boat and threw them in the river. The bargee said the wind had blown the rear barges across the river and the scull had got nipped between them and the bank, despite attempts by two men with poles to avoid the accident. But a Met Office witness testified there had been little wind that day. The judge said were too many barges in the chain and the back ones would always swing. He spoke from personal experience as an old oarsman on the Cam 13 05 30 p10

1913 05 11

Burwell boy rescues lad from Lode

1913 07 25

Burwell Charity inquiry, Trustees exonerated *

1913 08 15

Burwell Poor's Fen inquiry

1913 09 19

Burwell lighting the Row

1913 10 03

Burwell lighting

Following the destruction by fire of the Burwell Lode pumping engine at Upware in January the old engine was overhauled. It was restarted after six weeks and the pump kept going meanwhile by two heavy traction engines. But it was not quite strong enough to work the huge pump and in times of heavier floods difficulty had been experienced in coping with the water. Now a new one made by Ruston and Proctor of Lincoln has been delivered to Upware by road. Considerable difficulty was met with installing it as the station has not yet been rebuilt from the fire. The engine is much smaller so the walls have been lowered and a temporary roof erected. It worked very smoothly although the pump had been standing for over three months it raised the water in half the ordinary time. 13 10 03 p11

1913 11 14

Burwell benefaction – Gardiner

1913 11 14

A roan horse driven in Lipton's cart standing near Mr Laurence's blacksmith's shop, Burwell bolted when a locomotive engine came towards it and struck the Summer Light oil van. Both axles were severely wrenched, the spokes were forced out of the felloes and the wheels rendered so untrue that it is impossible to drive the cart even with a new shaft. Mr Guyatt lent a cart and the horse, being unhurt was driven away. This is the second time the same horse has bolted in Burwell 13 11 14 p11

1913 11 21

Burwell Gardiner's will

1913 11 28

Burwell parish council lighting streets

1913 12 12

Burwell yeomanry uniforms distributed

1914 06 04

London children come to Burwell in two batches for a fortnight's holiday; there is need for someone to arrange lodgings for them but nobody wants the job. There has been so much mischief done by these holiday children that they cannot get a person to look after them. People take these children who have no room for them and the children are huddled up any how, Poor Law guardians were told. 14 06 04 p8

1914 06 19

Burwell band newly formed

1914 07 02

Burwell Gardiner Memorial Hall to be erected – details

1914 07 24

Burwell hospital parade

1914 07 24

Burwell bargee to Lynn, lives Upware

1914 10 09

Burwell Gardiner Memorial Hall meeting

1914 10 16

Burwell – Parr wounded

1914 10 23

Belgian badge day, refugees, Louvain arrive, Soham, Burwell, Whittlesford

1914 10 30

Belgians – Waterbeach not help, Soham arrivals, Burwell, Bourn, Cottenham, Duxford, Gamlingay, Gt Eversden, Histon, Linton, Over, Sawston, Swavesey, Chatteris, Cheveley

1914 11 06

Belgians – Littleport, Burwell, Chatteris, Duxford, Comberton, Sawston, Elsworth, Fen Drayton, Swavesey, Fordham, West Wickham, Wicken, Gamlingay, Willingham, Madingley, Isleham, Landbeach, Linton, Lode, Oakington,

1914 11 13

Burwell nurses fund

1814 11 20

Belgians – Balsham, Milton, Fulbourn, Burwell

1914 12 04

Stephen Marshall of Cambridge was one of the three survivors when HMS Bulwark was destroyed at Sheerness. He was drinking tea when he was blown 100 feet up into the air then found himself in the sea which was swirling tempestuously. There was no wreckage to which he could cling and he was obliged to start swimming until picked up by a boat. He is being treated in Chatham Hospital. His family, in Trinity Place, rejoice to hear of his lucky escape. But Joseph Ellis, a stoker on the ship, was killed. His father is a hairdresser almost opposite Burwell church

1914 12 11

Burwell burglary Anchor Lane

Burwell Gardiner Hall stone laying

1914 12 18

Burwell Gardiner Memorial Hall stone laying

1915 09 10

Hauxton new vicar, from Burwell – Colebrooke

Burwell VTC guard bridges at night

1920 04 14

Washes flooded between Upware & Ely, drainage engines in Burwell fen working at full pressure, men patrolling in thigh boots

1920 07 07

Burwell Dr Evatt allegations – 20 07 07a

1920 07 13

Burwell doctor suicide following inquiry into misconduct

1922 12 20

There are at present four schools in Burwell and as from January the needs of elementary education will be served by three. Burwell Parochial (Boys) School will be closed with a consequent annual saving of approximately £500. An important part of the curriculum will be practical instruction in woodwork, cookery and laundry work. At the present moment this instruction is carried out at a room in the "Five Bells" but it is desirable instruction should be available on the school premises and not in a building half a mile away

1923 05 14

A shed belonging to Mr Knott, but basket maker and carrier, of Burwell, was found to be on fire and was destroyed. Mr Owen Warren passed the shed - an erection of wood and corrugated iron - and noticed a smell of burning such as might come from a burning rubbish heap. He went home and sat down to supper, when he reflected that there was no rubbish heap near the shed, so he turned out again to look at it, and then saw that flames were leaping. He called for assistance and many willing workers came to prevent the flame from spreading. Water was obtained from the Lode and the adjoining properties were protected. The fire may have originated from a stove used to warm the shed, in which some work-girls had been during the day

1924 01 24

Mr W Cross of Northfield Farm, Exning has a sow which in 341 days, has farrowed 51 pigs of which 46 are alive or are gone to the butchers. Several weighed 154 lbs at 20 weeks old. The sow was bred by Mr Robert Stephenson at Manor House Burwell

1924 04 07c

Cambridgeshire county council resolved to recommend to the Secretary of State the protection of chaffinch, hedgesparrow, wren, robin and other insect feeding birds and their eggs in the parishes of Cottenham, Willingham Melbourn and Burwell for the special reason that these birds consume large quantities of insects which do enormous damage to the fruit growing districts.

1924 05 18c

A number of parents from Swaffham Prior and Reach were brought before the Bottisham police court for not sending their children to Burwell School. In order to provide children over eleven years of age with a superior education it was found advisable to reorganise the schools in that area. The county education committee has provided a motor omnibus to convey the children to Burwell. Far from overcoming the objections of the parents this bus seems one of the chief sources of objection. Other parents object on the score of extra expense for packing up their children's dinners

1924 08 05c

The West Cambs Fruit Growers' Association inspected Mr Robert Stephenson's new cold storage premises and fruit plantations at Burwell Little Fen. It is divided into four cold chambers, a packing shed and engine room. A large Cutler grader is to be installed. The engine and plant for cooling

include a big Blackstone oil engine and Petter oil engine. The stores will accommodate about 600 tons of fruit

1924 08 19c

Robert Fuller told Newmarket court that he was an agricultural labourer. He was working with James Jaggard on the Ness road, Burwell for the County Council when defendant rode up on his pedal bicycle and called them two lazy devils. He replied "If I am lazy, you must be lazy as well" whereupon defendant threw his bicycle on the ground and struck him. Defendant said he was sitting in his front room having breakfast when he saw these two men on the road doing nothing. He told them "you are wasting the ratepayers' money. I could do more after tea that you are doing". He was a substantial farmer and annoyed to see the men wasting their time. When he thought Fuller was going to strike him with a shovel he struck to protect himself. He was fined £1

1924 09 16c

George Mansfield gave evidence that he started a motor service from Burwell four years ago. He bought a new bus this year. At the Swan corner in Bottisham an Ortona bus passed him and pulled on the bend, making him wait or go bumping over the green. Eventually he passed by going on the path. The Ortona was in the habit of passing him and then going very slowly in front. Defendant said Mansfield started a bus to run in front of the Ortona and take away their customers and the firm would not stand that.

1925 05 28

A Burwell publican came up for public examination at the bankruptcy court. In 1895 he was working for a man as a farm labourer and cab driver, also for the vicar of Burwell as groom and gardener. In 1897 he began business as a publican and took the King William. The only experience he had had was serving at a house where he had previously worked as a jobbing man in the yard. He bought a horse for haggle-carting purposes and to use in a fourwheeler & while he was carting his wife looked after the business. Trade at the pub got slack and the carting business was also a failure. He borrowed £40 from the Provincial Union Bank, Ipswich to pay the brewer.

1925 07 06

As from July 1st all policemen will live rent free, the Chief Constable reported. The need for a police house at Harston was very urgent because the owner of the house which the policeman now occupied had been waiting until the officer moved before he could get married. The new Cambridge town planning scheme was bringing a road from Cherry Hinton to the Ditton and Horningsea road and they wanted a site on the Cambridge side of the new road. At Burwell the police house was complete, with the exception of the water supply

1926 01 07

Further manifestation of the stubbornness of parents in the Bottisham area against sending their children to school at Burwell was forthcoming when a number of summonses for non-attendance were heard. One case was adjourned in order to consider whether the County Council would sanction a child remaining at Swaffham School, where there was plenty of room. One parent contended it would be detrimental to the health of his children, who were delicate, to go to Burwell. If the girl was allowed to go to Reach school for a year he would be prepared to send her to Burwell after that, if she grew out of her delicate condition.

1926 04 01

The annual meeting of Swaffham Prior parish council turned out to be quite a passive affair. Mr R. Cooper said they wanted a school and there would never be any peace and quiet in the village until they got one. The parents who sent their children to Burwell only did so on sufferance. The grouping scheme had been brought about to suit the pockets of the "money-grabbing" ratepayers. They had been "diddled" out of their school and the labouring parties had been put down as if they had no sense.

1927 03 16

Cambridgeshire Education Committee discussed Swaffham Prior Church of England School. The church trustees were prepared to build a new school for junior children and infants, the older children being sent to Burwell. A deputation wanted a Council school, suitable for all classes and ages but it was not their policy to do that sort of thing.

1927 12 08

For some times the rivalries of various motor bus drivers plying for hire between Newmarket and Burwell have been particularly keen, and there has been some trouble that has got as far as the Police Court. A bus driver employed by Albert Norman of Exning said he had got to the corner near the church at Burwell when an Ortona bus passed, going 30 mph, and cut right in front of him, which necessitated him jamming on his brakes to avoid an accident. The driver told him: "If you don't let me pass I shall smash the back of your bus in. That is just what you little people want, so that you can get a new bus". The magistrate said the rivalry among the bus drivers was a danger to the public and must cease.

1928 07 26

Burwell Parish Council called attention to the need of a shorter route between Burwell and Wicken now that Dimock's Cote Bridge had been opened to traffic. Although the villages were only two miles apart the present distance by road was 8½ miles. This could be remedied by the hardening of the first driveway and making 30 chains of a new road. It would reduce the distance for all traffic that had to pass via Fordham and Stretham and be a great saving of time and expense to road users which would pay for itself by lessening the mileage of road used

1928 08 24

An important improvement in East Cambs will be effected by the new road which it is proposed should be made from Burwell to the Wicken main road in Heditch Field. It would relieve the main road through Fordham of a considerable amount of traffic and assist an agricultural area. Newmarket R.D.C. has appointed a special committee to deal with the matter

1929 08 16

Burwell chemist McBeath life-saving method – CDN 16.8.1929

1929 08 22

Burwell – Wicken road – CDN 22.8.1929

1929 10 28

The well-known cement works of Messrs R. Stephenson & Son between Burwell and Fordham, now closed, have been purchased by the Associated Cement-makers Companies, a powerful combine owning many cement factories. For a long time it has been felt in Burwell that the only hope of carrying on the factory was to merge it in a combine. During the war the factory did very well indeed because the Government wanted so much cement that every factory was employed. Today orders are far from plentiful. As one of a large combine the Burwell factory may get its share, and the works may give considerable employment.

1931 05 08

The soft roads in Burwell and Swaffham Prior are in a very bad state. Much of the land cost £50 an acre 50 years ago but now sold for about £10; landlords had been paying highway rates for 60 years for very little benefit and could not be asked to contribute to repairs. The same applied elsewhere: valuable land had depreciated owing to the difficulty of getting to it in winter. Unemployed men should be employed to make them up. 31 05 08c & d

1938 04 08

George Wybrow started his railway career in 1892 as a clerk at Sawbridgeworth from which he was transferred to Bishop's Stortford, Liverpool Street and finally to Haverhill. He was appointed stationmaster at Stretham in 1912, then went to Burwell and Mildenhall. In 1927 he was made stationmaster at Saffron Walden and since 1930 has also been in charge of Audley End station. He believes that in spite of the ever-increasing road transport the railways, which have reached a high degree of efficiency, are unrivalled for speed and safety 38 04 08a

1938 07 06

Burwell lads had been drinking at Waterbeach and arrived at Upware ferry about 11pm. There was a ferry staging and they pushed it adrift. It weighed half-a-ton and was dangerous when floating submerged. A notice board was also pulled off and they turned their attention to the South Level tollhouse. Windows were smashed with a hoe and the bedroom covered with glass. One lad said they went to the house for shelter as it was raining, but could not get in and spent the night in a barn. He wanted to swim the river for the boat, but the others would not let him. They were fined. 38 07 06

1938 08 13

The harvest is in full swing; the dry summer means gain to the heavy land and fenland farmers but a loss to the light lands with corn yield and quality far superior to last year. Against this must be set off the partial failure of the hay, sugar beet, roots and other green crops required to feed the cattle and stock during the coming autumn and winter. At Burwell there is a total failure of fruit owing to severe frosts, Ickleton report a poor year for roots – the soil is much too dry, Oakington wheat looks well but sprouts and cabbage are very poor at Steeple Morden. - 38 08 13

1939 08 04

Cambridgeshire was not likely to be attacked in the event of war: there were no munitions factories and places of military importance. This is why it would be one place to which people were evacuated. Two first-aid parties would be stationed in Soham together with three ambulance depots. There would be mobile first-aid units to carry doctors and nurses to casualties and four decontamination units, one based at Burwell, Thirty ambulances would be needed and they were trying to get lorries of suitable size fitted up with everything necessary, a meeting was told. 39 08 04c, d

1939 09 27

Blackout offences - Soham fish shop, Cheveley & Burwell houses – 39 09 27a, b

1940 03 29

Ouse Catchment Board's huge projects; if pumping station at Upware would need raise banks Reach, Burwell & Wicken lodes – 40 03 29a

1940 07 03

Burwell farmer failed to plough five fields – 40 07 03b

1942 06 15

King and Queen Tour Fens, - Their Majesties the King and Queen on Saturday paid a visit to reclaimed fen land in Cambridgeshire, and saw for themselves the magnificent work that is being carried out by the Cambs War Agricultural Executive on the vital food front. Indeed the whole five thousand acres at Swaffham Prior Fen and Adventurers Fen, Burwell is nothing more nor less than a battlefield where men and women, armed with the latest weapons of agriculture, are carrying out relentless warfare against rushes, scrub, bog oaks and flooding. Considerably more than half the 5,000 acres was derelict in 1939; the remainder produced only moderate crops . . . During their visit their Majesties travelled over miles of new concrete roads through Reach to Adventurers Fen, Burwell where they embarked on barges at Cock Up Bridge on Burwell Lode, which runs through artificial banks above the level of the fen. While the barges were sailing down the Lode demonstrations of blasting bog oaks by explosives were given, – 42 06 15, 15a-b

1943 04 07

Deserter found in Burwell house – 43 04 07

1944 08 16

RAF plane crashes in flames at Burwell, civilian and three crew killed – 44 08 16

1948 04 14

The nocturnal appearance of a sack of barley in the front garden of the house of a Burwell baker on a dark and rainy night last month, had an unexpected and involved sequel at the Newmarket Petty Sessions when a baker, together with a Burwell stockman appeared to answer a total of four summonses. The baker denied he had broken the law. "It was a rough night - dark and rainy when I opened my gate and kicked against a bag. I took it in so that it would not be left in the wet. The policeman called next morning". The case was found proved and he was fined £2

1949 10 28

The county council are to be recommended to take steps to obtain an order subjecting High Street Swavesey to a 30 mph speed limit. It will also be imposed in built up areas at Burwell, Isleham, Shepreth, Bassingbourn and Lt Abington. But they refused Kingston parish council's application for a speed limit there

1949 12 09

A further 6,550 acres of Swaffham Prior and Burwell fens is to be referred to the Agricultural Land commission for consideration as to whether it should be taken over by the state. The Agricultural Act empowers the Minister to acquire agricultural land when it's full and efficient use is prevented by work not being carried out efficiently, or because equipment is not being provided or maintained. Opinion in the area is that considerable hardship could be caused should it be decided to recommend state ownership.

1950 01 18

Crowding into the Gardiner Memorial Hall at Burwell, fenland farmers and smallholders decided to form an action committee to fight a Ministry of Agriculture proposal to put 6,550 acres of lands in the Swaffham Prior and Burwell fens into state ownership. The area contains a good proportion of large blocks of land of 100 acres or more. If the land were purchased it would be at compulsory purchase value, without consideration for potential value

1950 01 19

In these days, when it not always easy to let the ballroom for a dance, it is unusual to hear of the Cambridge Guildhall being booked two consecutive nights in order to accommodate all those wishing to attend a function. This happened when the Cambridge Co-operative Society held their annual staff party for 900 employees and friends. Special trains brought them from Duxford, Melbourn, Burwell, Willingham and Bishop's Stortford.

1950 02 09

During summer 1949 a Burwell farmer bought three huts at Wratting Common airfield. He intended using the rubble from one of the huts, two were of the "Nissen" type and the other reinforced concrete, to make a road at his farm. On Tuesday he went to demolish it. While inside with another man his son hit the wall with a twelve-pound hammer and suddenly part of the roof collapsed, causing injuries from which one man died.

1950 09 29

Built from local materials by local labour, a delightful pair of cottages recently completed in High Street, Lode, are in striking contrast to many modern houses. They were erected for Lord Fairhaven, whose desire was that they should be in keeping with the characteristics of the village. They are of colour-washed Burwell bricks & thatched with straw from his farm

1951 02 02

The Agricultural Land Commission have completed their survey of Swaffham Prior and Burwell fens. They make proposals for improvements and repairs to equipment and for the claying of a substantial acreage of the lighter soils, most of which can be carried out by the owners and occupiers, and say there is no case for compulsory acquisition for the greater part of the land.

1952 04 01

Borough Green, cut off by the blizzard of the week-end, was relieved when Council workmen carved a one-way traffic line through the eight and ten-foot drifts on the main Dullingham Road. One of the first people in the village was the milkman bring the first supply of fresh milk since Saturday morning. Thirty-three snow ploughs have been called into action to assist 27 villages in the Newmarket area. Five passengers who were stranded when an Eastern Counties bus was abandoned at Wickhambrook were put up for the night by people in nearby cottages and did not get back to their homes at Burwell until the afternoon. Then they had to walk over drifts that were often 10 to 12 feet high.

1952 04 18

A rookery, recently established in the Vicarage garden at Burwell, is not likely to be long-lived. Despite well-wishers in the village wanting the birds to stay the Vicar has decided that the four newly built nests in his walnut trees must be exterminated because they are a nuisance. "But", he said "because of meddlesome busybodies who are creating unpleasantness and because I am a life member of the Cambridge University Federation for Animal Welfare it is very difficult for me to get rid of these birds". Now two men with shot-guns have been seen in the garden and one bird was killed "instantaneously".

1952 08 06

Cambridge Centaur Motor Cycle Club's Bank Holiday Scramble at Spring Close, Burwell attracted a crowd of over 5,000 who were treated to a thrilling afternoon's racing on what must be the finest scramble course for many miles. Situated on the site of an old Norman castle and incorporating several crossings of the now dry moats, the course included a number of very steep ascents from which most of the riders made spectacular leaps. Spectators were able to see most of the racing from the high ground in the centre of the track upon which the castle had stood. Two very popular riders, E.J. Wiffen of the Grasshopper Club and the local Centaur ace, H.D. Halsey, emerged as the stars of the meeting.

1952 12 04

The villagers of Reach want their village to remain a village in its own right. They do not want to become part of Swaffham Prior. Strictly speaking Reach has never been a village in its own right – part of it lying within the parish of Burwell and part in Swaffham Prior, now an Inquiry is trying to sort the matter out. They concede that the present set-up is unsatisfactory but feel the answer is to make Reach a parish of its own.

1953 07 17

The Minister of Agriculture was asked In Parliament why Adventurers Fen in Burwell, which was derequisitioned last year, is to be handed back to the National Trust in view of their expressed intention to flood it. How much public money has been spent by the Agricultural Executive Committee and how did he justify making derelict good agricultural land by flooding? He replied that the research work done at Wicken was enormously important. The National Trust land covered about 280 acres and only 120 acres of the poorest and wettest land would be flooded

1953 11 03

A wartime German bomb was discovered 30 feet from the Mildenhall railway line at Exning Halt, near Burwell. For over 11 years trains had passed the spot, blissfully unaware that hidden less than a foot beneath the ground was a bomb large enough to cause an unpleasant explosion. It was found by John Debenham who was ploughing a field when he struck something which broke a peg in his

plough. "We soon realised it was a bomb and thought of pulling it out with a chain", he said. But instead he reported it to the police.

1954 02 25

The fight by farmers in the Swaffham Prior and Burwell Fens to stop the Government from compulsorily purchasing their land reached a public inquiry. It had been pasture until the Second World War forced the landowners to turn it into arable; much of the land had to be drained and concrete roads added. The Ministry claim the farm buildings were very poor and ought to be rebuilt but it was sheer madness to erect brick buildings because the land would not stand it, being black peat. It was not unknown for vibrations caused by passing lorries to cause buildings partially to collapse.

1954 04 05

The 'birth' of the Parish of Reach was marked by a ceremony in the schoolroom when the Chairman of the County Council formally handed over to the new Chairman of the Parish Council (Mr A. Housden) a copy of the Statutory Order and a minute book. The people of Reach felt they had lost their identity by being swallowed up by Burwell and Swaffham and recognised that a small unit of local government, if it adopted a method of 'give and take', could be a benefit to everyone concerned. There were no worse quarrels than those which took place over neighbouring walls and it was the spirit of forgiving neighbours which was so necessary to make life enduring in Reach.

1954 05 01

Three farmers from Swaffham Prior Fen, who have for five years been living and trying to farm under the threat of Government acquisition of their land have been reprieved. Altogether 588 acres were involved but the Minister of Agriculture has decided only to acquire 312 acres at Hundred Acre Farm, Burwell Fen. The Rev Eric Marsh, formerly Vicar of Over urged the Ministry to speed up such decisions: no man was going to develop his land or improve it if he thought it would be taken from him. Mr Harold Sennitt, whose family has farmed in the district since 1927, had been threatened with the loss of 39 of the 45 acres of root crops he farms, Leonard Folkes five acres and Ernest Garner 90.

1955 07 08

Albert Grainger, the Burwell photographer, has died aged 69. A cheerful character he had made a host of friends during his 31 years in the photographic business. He worked as butler-valet for Lord Glanely at Exning House until in 1923 he set up in business at Burwell. His first job was a wedding the day after the shop was opened. Throughout his career he was assisted by his wife, Dorothy, who carried on the business for some time after his illness. 55 07 08b

1955 11 07

Freak storms were reported in various parts of the county with thunder, lightning and huge hailstones. Mrs Sadler of Whittlesford reported that hailstones the size of walnuts fell in the village and there was hardly a house without windows broken. At Burwell hailstones larger than billiard balls shattered windows with 28 panes of glass broken in one house. 55 11 07b

1956 09 08

Great progress has been made since the devastating fire which destroyed more than half the factory of Corrugated Fittings of Burwell last April. Temporary buildings and even a marquee have been utilised, printers have dug ditches, engineers have loaded lorries and girls have taken apart and repainted machinery, redecorated and helped in cleaning up. Messrs MacKay of East Road have sourced the country for sufficient steel sections to allow rebuilding in time for new machinery. 56 09 08d

1956 12 14

Burwell is being visited by the new 'Community Survey' Mass Radiography Unit which hopes over 2,000 people over the age of five, will enter the large mobile van containing the X-ray equipment. The

unit will remain for a week to examine the X-ray photographs and recall any that are unsatisfactory.
56 12 14a

1957 07 27

The drainage of the fens moved into a new era with the opening at Upware of a fully automatic electric pump. Lord Fairhaven pressed a simple button to start it in motion. It is the first electric pump in the South Level and can move 125 tons of water a minute from Burwell Lode into the Cam. The existing pumps were 18 years old, were efficient and worked very well. But they would be unable to cope under abnormal conditions. 57 07 27

1957 10 25

Burwell factory Corrugated Fittings opens – 57 10 25

1958 01 31

The level crossing at Low Fen Drove, Quy is to be reduced to an accommodation crossing so British Transport will no longer have to employ a crossing keeper. There will be unlocked gates for pedestrians with locked gates for vehicles for which keys will be supplied to the occupiers of land served by the drove. The same will apply to the crossing at Haycross Road, Burwell. 58 01 31b

1958 04 26

Burwell policeman Sirett death – 58 04 26

1958 12 19

Newmarket RDC has decided to erect units of old persons' accommodation at Soham and Burwell. Each unit will comprise a sitting room with a bed recess and kitchenette together with a small wash basin. There will be communal W.C.s and bathrooms. They will be central heated though there will be a coal fire in the communal sitting-room. 58 12 19d

1959 08 06

The castle slopes at Spring Close, Burwell, were covered with some 3,000 people on August Bank Holiday to watch the scramble organised by the Cambridge Centaur Motor Cycle Club. The course was in prime condition, being damp enough to eliminate any dust hazard and not too sticky as to bog the riders down in the mud. The senior race was won easily by Andy Lee with K. Covell second and T.H. Howard third, all riding B.S.A. machines. 59 08 06

The Cambridgeshire Collection has newspaper cuttings files from this date

1961 12 02

Burwell's new Church of England Primary School was opened by one of the newest village residents, Francis Pym MP. It was impossible to improve the curriculum with a collection of small schools and several had been closed. While no Cambridgeshire schools were 'too bad', plenty ought to be improved. It was no good having wonderful technical and secondary education if a child was stunted at the primary stage: the country's greatest asset was the brains of its young people. 61 12 02

1962 03 09

Burwell former Maids Head public house is now a home – 62 03 09

1962 04 16

An electrical storm near Isleham was the most violent in living memory. It lasted only 15 minutes but behind it there was a trail of shattered fir poles, dead cable and a jagged crack running down a farmhouse wall. The storm hit the area with such force that the top half of electricity poles carrying 11,000 volt cable between Elderberry and Burn Foot Tree farms were split in half. Scientists have noticed that electrical storms are becoming more violent, especially in the Fens. The area around

Burwell has always experienced storms of greater severity due, possibly, to an excess of iron content in the sub-soil 62 04 16b

1962 07 02

St Mary's Church, Swaffham Bulbeck, held a parade to mark the feast of St Peter, reviving a ceremony that has not been celebrated for 30 years. Led by Burwell Band, members of the British Legion, Fire Brigade, Sunday School and Mother's Union processed round the village, stopping five times for the band to play. The parade was followed by a flower-decked hay cart depicting the carpentry and stone mason's tools being used in the restoration of the south aisle of the church 62 07 02a

1962 09 18

The new Chapel of the Blessed Virgin Mary and St Nicholas at St James' Church, Lode, was dedicated by the Bishop of Ely. It has been given to the church by Lord Fairhaven in memory of his parents. The chapel was designed by Professor Sir Albert Richardson and built by Mr P. Golding, a local builder, in Burwell rock (known locally as 'clunch') taken from a disused pit. The church was also constructed from this material 100 years ago. Because specialised craftsmen were needed and the mining of the rock took a considerable time, the chapel has taken two years to build. 62 09 18a

1962 11 02

Mr A.R. Paske started a packaging business in an old chapel in North Street Burwell about 15 years ago, making strawberry chips. His Corrugated Fittings Limited became so successful that it was acquired by Tillotsons which makes containers for Black Magic chocolate and Senior Service cigarette packets. Their new factory employs 250 men and women who appear to be keen and happy; production is continuous and several hundred thousand boxes are sent off every day 62 11 02c

1963 01 05

Two railway lines in Cambridgeshire are under threat following Dr Beeching's proposals. All lines transporting less than 10,000 people and 10,000 tons of freight a week may close. This includes the line from Cambridge through Histon and Oakington and the one to Mildenhall through Burwell. Fruit growers would be seriously affected and have to switch to road transport, putting up prices. Rural bus services are another failure of Government policy and had been cut because they were unprofitable, a Labour meeting was told 62 12 07cThe Lands Tribunal confirmed an offer of £4,300 compensation by the Ministry of Agriculture following compulsory requisition of 75 acres of Burwell Fen 63 01 05a

1963 02 21

There were a great number of old people in Burwell who needed a Meals on Wheels service Magnetic Devices of Newmarket had offered to provide 10 meals from their canteen each day and the W.V.S., who used to operate a free soup service, may help again. At Soham they charged one shilling a meal – the price having been reduced from one-and-six when it was found some old people were unable to afford that amount. The cost of producing the meal was two shilling and twopence and the money needed was raised locally. They were lucky to have an excellent band of voluntary workers who went round in their cars delivering the food. 63 02 21a

1963 03 01

Ancient fireplace and oak chimney discovered at house in Burwell – 63 03 1b

1963 11 07

A new Army Cadet Force weekend training centre opened at Burwell in old school buildings. It would accommodate some 50 cadets and provide lecture rooms, adult dining room and ladies' sleeping accommodation in a new hut. The Cadet Force was now about 500 and tactical training would take place on Spring Close, adjacent. 63 11 07

1964 03 26

Clunch was for centuries an important material but now the old quarries have fallen into disuse except as sources of stone for road-mending and fen-embanking. Sometimes the waste rubble was burnt for unslaked lime and the limekilns in Carter's Quarry at Burwell were used as air raid shelters. They are still there, derelict and tumble-down with the shed that once housed the transport horses. Part of the interior of Heydon Church, bombed during the war, was rebuilt with clunch and at Lode a new chapel, built entirely with clunch, was added by Lord Fairhaven when builders had to be specially trained for the work. 64 03 26

John Wilson of Horningsea has transformed a 60-year-old mouldering waterlogged hulk which had foundered in Burwell Lode to a trim cabin cruiser. It has been refitted using mahogany from an old grand piano. John, a 16-year-old naval student, has always had a strong interest in boats and the sight of the Santa Anna lying derelict resulted in discussions with his father. He baled it out and rowed it home. Now it will be relaunched 64 04 11 photo 64 04 13a

1964 06 08

Burwell Poor's Fen Charity has been in debt since they were set up in 1883 after villagers had rioted over rights to cut grass and reeds on common land. They'd armed themselves with cutlasses and staves and the militia were called out to restore order. But the charity had to play for the military's costs out of their income. Now they have sold Poor's Fen Farm and invested the money to supply coal to the poor and needy 64 06 08

1964 09 25

Burwell photo feature – 64 09 25b

1965 02 08

Burwell Secondary Modern School is progressive – feature – 65 02 08a

1965 06 28

Tillotson's modern styled pavilion Burwell opened – 65 06 28a

1966 02 18

High Bridge over Burwell Lode, cock-up-bridge - may have steps in place of ramps – 66 02 18a

1971 07 06

Burwell brickworks closure – 71 07 06a

1972 03 06

A Burwell landmark, one of the two 180 foot high chimneys at the disused brickworks was demolished on Saturday – but only after two earlier bids failed. The first two attempts left the chimney standing on a section of its base measuring only three feet by 18 inches. A final explosion with one-and-a-half pounds of blasting gelatine was needed to send the chimney crashing. The operation was part of a plan to clear the former Burwell Brick Company which ceased production last autumn. The brick company folded as they were no longer making money due to a shrinking order book, old plant and high costs. The firm were sold by their parent company, Ibstock Brick & Tile Company to Ruane Developments who plan to turn the 40-acre site into a rubbish dump

1972 05 20

The rapid growth of Burwell - which has almost doubled in population in 10 years - may have to be slowed down to allow public services to catch up. The village which now has a population of more than 5,000, needs improved sewerage facilities to cope with the new homes and trade waste from a large factory.

1973 08 20

Only three boats took part in a demonstration cruise to draw attention to the Reach and Burwell lodes which were in danger of being closed and drained. But Great Ouse River Authority had already agreed to spend £155,000 in preserving the waterway. The lodes were constructed to drain the fens

but the drainage has shrunk the peat soil so that the waterways and their banks stand above the surrounding land. Now the banks are wearing and leaking - flooding the land they were constructed to drain

1973 09 08

The men from the Ministry have given in to the potato pickers of Burwell. They say villagers can go and dig up the 80 tons of potatoes which red tape threatened to let rot. They are in a field which has been bought for the construction of the Newmarket bypass. Earlier this week about 40 villagers who were trying to salvage the potatoes were ordered off the field by workmen. Villagers and conservationists raised a storm of protest.

1974 05 10

Water seeping through the banks of the Reach, Burwell, Swaffham Bulbeck and Bottisham lodes presented the Great Ouse local land drainage committee with a cash dilemma: spending a smaller amount of money but partly closing the system to navigation or spending a lot more to allow boating to continue. The engineer said there was a straight choice. This involved demolishing all or part of the high-level lode systems so creating a new low-level system of drains, or retaining the high-level systems and controlling the seepage that occurs. "Once you close a system of waterways to navigation you will never get it open again", he said.

1975 05 29

Mr Bernard Smith is proud of the way he keeps Burwell's Gardiner Memorial Hall spotless. He polishes the floor seven hours a week. He is also proud of the way he keeps the cemetery tidy. He mows the grass until it is as smooth as a bowling green. But Mr Smith, who receives £35 a week says hooligans tearing holes the in tennis court fence, "breaking everything" and leaving the area "in a hell of a mess" makes looking after the 9½ acres of the recreation ground a thankless task

1976 01 05

About 700 homes in mid-Anglia were without electricity today – more than 48 hours after the gales. The areas hit by major faults included Saffron Walden, Ickleton, Burwell, Littleport, Haddenham, Gamlingay and Melbourn. Up until yesterday afternoon between 1,500 and 2,000 homes had been without power. The Fire Brigade dealt with 150 emergency calls and had all their appliances working to make wind-damaged property safe. Thirty caravans were blown over at Caravan International's Newmarket site.

1976 05 10

A flotilla of 14 boats sailed to Burwell in a "quiet demonstration" in support of preserving the ancient fenland waterways. The Commodore of the Cambridge Motor Boat Club, Chief Inspector Roy Hardingham of the city police said it was designed to make the point that the lodes should be protected for boating of all kinds, for fishing and because they were part of our heritage. Mr Geoffrey Woollard said Anglian Water Authority now seemed convinced that it would be foolhardy to destroy the lodes, which are reputed to date back to Roman times

1976 07 22

Apathetic villagers in Burwell and Cheveley have caused East Cambridgeshire District Council to hold a fourth round of parish council elections in an attempt to fill two vacant seats. Both councils have had their membership increase because of additional population. Three poll attempts have failed to stir villagers' interest. The clerk of Cheveley council said people were apathetic – but they moaned when things weren't done. The chairman of Burwell council said: "I think it is disgusting; I know people who are willing to stand but can't be bothered to get the forms – and you can't nurse them"

1977 09 24

Locals in Burwell cast a quizzical eye over the new thatched roof of a cottage in High Street. From a distance it looks the same as any other. But close up something appears to be different. The thatch is made of fibreglass sheets, screwed to the roof. It costs slightly more than a normal thatch but has been

treated to make it fireproof, needs no maintenance and will last far longer than a straw or reed thatch. The product is manufactured by Fibrethatch, a Royston firm. Whatever the benefits the roofs are bad news for birds. They will not be able to burrow their way in to nest.

1977 12 24

The only barber in Burwell still to practice the art of shaving is retiring. Tom Ellis of High Street has been hairdresser in the village for more than 50 years and still has regular customers coming in for a shave. He said: "I don't know what some of the old men will do now because they can't shave themselves, even with a modern razor. Before the war my father used to collect a few papers for the people in the village who could read, which wasn't many. When I started we used to collect them from the train, but when the station closed the Burwell and District bus used to drop them off here. Now the van brings them and we sell something over 500 papers a night."

1978 08 01

The fate of one of Cambridge's best-known family firms hang in the balance with decision of Mr Horrie Mansfield to retire as senior partner of the Burwell and District Motor Service after more than 50 years at the wheel. He has tried to retire several times without success but now finds that running the company – and doing frequent driving stints himself – is becoming a strain. Burwell, begun by his father in 1921, has built up a reputation for reliability and efficiency. It started with a motor-cycle and sidecar, then secured a taxi and its first 20-seat bus van. Now it is a thriving company employing more than 20 people

1978 10 25

Dorothy Grainger's tiny cluttered cottage in Burwell is full of her pictures – not framed or in albums but stuffed into old boxes and wrinkled paper bags. She was that sort of photographer, nothing fancy or arty. Just plain, professional pictures that told the story she had been paid to tell. Now nearly 84 she rides a motorised wheelchair, but loves to relive the days when she roamed the Fens on a motorbike with her heavy wooden tripod and half-plate camera strapped on her back.

1979 07 16

The fate of the ancient waterways known as lodes in the Burwell area are hanging in the balance. Conservationists argue they are sanctuaries for wild life and a quiet beauty spot in the flat, arable landscape. They are important for anglers, boaters and ramblers. But water seeps through the banks and there is a danger of them collapsing completely, causing severe flooding. There was an outcry when Great Ouse River Division proposed to bulldoze them to make way for a ground drainage system. Now the Ministry of Agriculture may pay towards drainage if local councils can also fund it. But they say they have no money.

1979 09 17

Eight miles of lodes in the Burwell district could collapse, causing massive flooding, unless £1 million is spent to consolidate them. Not everybody agrees they should be saved. Since fen drainage the peat has shrank leaving the banks 15-20 feet high above the surrounding land. If the trendy conservationist lobby is going for strict historical accuracy then it should support a project which reduces the banks, not raise them still further. But they are a vital amenity and one of the few havens of natural beauty in the region. If enough people feel strongly enough and are prepared to back starry-eyed ideas with cash then their conservation must be assured.

1980 07 02

A former Burwell and District double-decker bus which was saved from the scrapyards near Lincoln has arrived back in the village. The Daimler Fleetline was driven the 120 miles by two former Burwell and District drivers, Jim Neale and Brian Camps. The bus ran faultlessly on the long journey home. Enthusiasts hope to restore it to its former glory so that it can be used for charity work. 80 07 02a

1980 12 01

Soham Comrades' Band is the new brass band champion of Cambridge, snatching the title from Littleport. Chatteris Town Band came third. Each had to play a march, a hymn and one other work. In the contest for small bands Waterbeach took the first prize, Wicken was second, followed by Cottenham, Haddenham and Burwell. Cottenham took the Cook trophy for the highest marks in the march with the Ernie Avery memorial trophy for the highest marks in the hymn going to Waterbeach. 80 12 01

1982 07 09

Another £264,000 is to be spent on improving the banks of Burwell and Reach Lodes as part of a 20-year scheme to prevent flooding. The work was implemented after a long protest campaign to ensure the present system of lodes was preserved. About two miles of bank are involved and a road is being extended to make full use of the clay available nearby. 82 07 09

1983 01 04

The New Year came in with a blaze of light in Burwell and Saffron Walden where 20 ft beacons were lit to mark the start of the Boys' Brigade centenary year. They were part of a chain of 150 throughout the country. At Walden there was a torchlight procession to the beacon built on the Anglo-American playing field while 70 people joined in celebrations on land at Swaffham Road, Burwell. 83 01 04a

1983 02 24

The old blacksmith's shop in Burwell is to have a new lease of life. The forge, made mainly of clunch, has two hearths and dates back to 1710. The last blacksmiths to work there were brothers Jim and Tom Lawrence. But now it has been rebuilt as a craft workshop and hopes to run blacksmith's courses in conjunction with nearby Burwell House. The main problem is finding skilled people to work there. 83 02 24

1984 01 12

An unemployed teenager pocked thousands of pounds from church offertory boxes after 400 raids on churches. On one occasion he sat in St Edward's church, Cambridge and watched an old woman put an envelope containing £70 into a church box then fished it out for himself. Amongst his targets were the Round Church – 52 thefts, Little St Mary's (46). Burwell church (42) and Swaffham Prior (26). He was finally caught after the Vicar of Oakington heard him inside the church opening drawers. He was sent to a detention centre for four months. 84 01 12 p16

1983 09 03

Twenty-eight Cambridgeshire schools use corporal punishment. At Burwell Village College the cane is used by the warden on very rare occasions, at Cottenham only in extreme cases such as continual bullying and Manor School carry out caning in rare and severe cases. Netherhall School says it is rarely and reluctantly resorted to by the headmaster or his deputies and St Bede's school has a similar policy 83 09 03

1985 03 29

Burwell alarmed at nuclear waste dump – 85 03 29

1985 06 29

Cambridge castle mound is being seriously damaged by the feet of thousands of visitors every year and the playful attentions of hundreds of children who have created two impromptu 'slides' down the steep slopes. Now archaeologists are to close the footpath and carry out much-needed repairs. Many other monuments are also in need of repair, including Burwell castle, Booth's Hill at Ramsey and the Devil's Dyke 85 06 29

1985 09 01

At the sound of a high-pitched squeal from a paging device 12 Burwell men leave their workbenches, desks or beds and go off to face fire, flood, fumes or any one of a range of disasters. They are officially known as retained fire-fighters and are on call 365 days a year. Other areas such as

Swaffham Bulbeck, Linton, Papworth and Kimbolton find it difficult to make up the minimum of a four-person crew and more recruits are needed. The annual retainer starts at £789 and there is a 'turn-out' fee of £5.83 for riding on the fire engine to an emergency call. 85 09 01a

1987 01 12

It was pitch dark at 3am one Sunday morning as a Newmarket lorry driver was making his way north of Littleport towards Welney. He was talking to his wife on CD radio when suddenly a bright green light appeared in the sky. It was heading down to earth at tremendous speed, then changed direction and zipped across the road before disappearing. His experiences follow that of two Burwell women who saw huge orange lights above the fields near Swaffham Prior. These are the first unidentified flying objects reported locally for six years. 87 01 12

1987 01 12

It was pitch dark at 3am one Sunday morning as a Newmarket lorry driver was making his way north of Littleport towards Welney. He was talking to his wife on CD radio when suddenly a bright green light appeared in the sky. It was heading down to earth at tremendous speed, then changed direction and zipped across the road before disappearing. His experiences follow that of two Burwell women who saw huge orange lights above the fields near Swaffham Prior. These are the first unidentified flying objects reported locally for six years. 87 01 12

1987 04 04

Burwell manor house and maltings is home to Mike Gernat's recruitment agency – 87 04 04

1989 09 06

Burwell day centre on site of Parsonage School opened – 89 09 06a

1990 07 26

Burwell Maltings business complex fire – 90 07 26